Dear Howard, 4/8/73

If you remember your contribution toward getting Lil an enforced rest two summers ago and your atoning by heeling in some plants for her, well, those we've not already moved are doing fine, as Lil noted this morning just before your 4/5 got here. And I've started another flowerbed, for which I'm providing a buried-brick border, to permit safe mowing. So, your posies will have a home.

I've heard nothing from Bud and I've stayed away from him. However, I have also made a couple of offers and I've done one thing by phone, having to do with immunity. On that I spoke first to Jim, who was here, and then to Bud's partner Bill, who dug and agreed. It has to do with the TRIAL article on grand juries to which I'd referred before.

Not only does Bud's behavior seem to have been proper (with one exception), I think it will continue to be. He represents McCord in a limited area, it seems and Jim says he thinks. He was not pre-empting Alch, was substituting while Alch was away, and it was to have excluded the deposition in the civil case. It did. Rothblatt (shudder, shudder) handled that. Here I think the CIA was looking out for itself.

McCord is a real tough tomcat, and Bud knows it. Therefore, he will not indulge himself as he has with me. He will cut no corners, take no liberties, be subdued, and that is the ideal way for selfish reasons, too. I am sure neither he not McCord did any leaking and reasonable sure what was leaked came from Fletcher Prouty and an UnAmerican investigator, to whom McCord undoubtedly spoke but without intent of breoadcasting. It is through Prouty that he went to Bud. Bud could have hinted to Prouty, but I do not know this. Prouty knows both. He has long been a friend of McCord's, from his military days, more than 10 years ago. (He was then impressed by McCord's performance.)

From one TV comment he made, I think McCord likes Bud. However, he is a grim reactionary, the superpatriot sort, and undoubtedly regards Bud as one of those "liberals" who is more dangerous than an authentic red, if he can make the distinction. So, intially, I think he'll tell Bud no more than he thinks he has to.

Bud should have been more forthright with Alch. On the other hand, Alch knew that McCord had asked Bud to help him.Both are wrong and neither is really right.

Jim shares my feeling that Prouty may be the military's answer to the Pentagon Papers.

Prouty described McCord as not only tough but a real pro in his field. I would agree, based on his surviving the Bay of Pigs and lasting 20 years in CIA. He could have lasted in the FBI by saying what he knew would satisfy Hoover, but not in CIA. If this is the case, as I think it is, then the one major conern now is how they'll try to frame him. I wish it had been possible for him to be quiet a little longer, so the counter-attack could have disclosed its tactics more. I believe he'll be able to substantiate just about everything he may say. Remember, you are not to be deceived by all this irrelavant reference to the alleged "hearsay". Before a Congressional Committee and before any grand jury, hearsay is perfectly good and just as proper. If it is hearsay. I suspect he'll have more. With his technical knowhow and his experience, it would have been child's play for him to have had himself wired for sound and a sound-activated tape recorder picking it all up. His phone? An infant could have done what was necessary, almost. Remember, he is a spook. So, I believe he lived like a spook. If so, the best is yet to come.

Getting Hersh's 3/27 so late was a benefit. It helps make sense out of the seemingly inexplicable: why McCord turned down so good an offer from the prosecution."They refused to discuss [with him] any possible involvement of Jeb Stuart Magruder." Thatbkind of prosecutor would have turned on honest man on - or off - however you look at it. This could also explain his ellipsis, which I took to be his saying that the cracks about Sloan were not supported by his knowledge and it was part of a scheme to exculpate Magruder. If I am right, this means he has locked horns with the U.S.Attorney's office, and that is a tough fight he has taken on. However, he may be figuring the judge correctly in this, and the sentence has not yet been passed. He said from the outset that he didn't trust DJ.

Weicher has been saying off the record what he said on the record last Sunday, less pointedly than privately, that Haldeman was the guiding spirit. At least knew. He told Ian this off the record the day of his press conference, just after it ended. Ian immediately told me. I was in his office. Back to the flowerbeds, thanks,